



Department of Planning,
Lands and Heritage



INNOVATE

Reconciliation Action Plan

March 2023 to February 2025





Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage on the formal endorsement of its Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for the Department to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, the Department will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process.

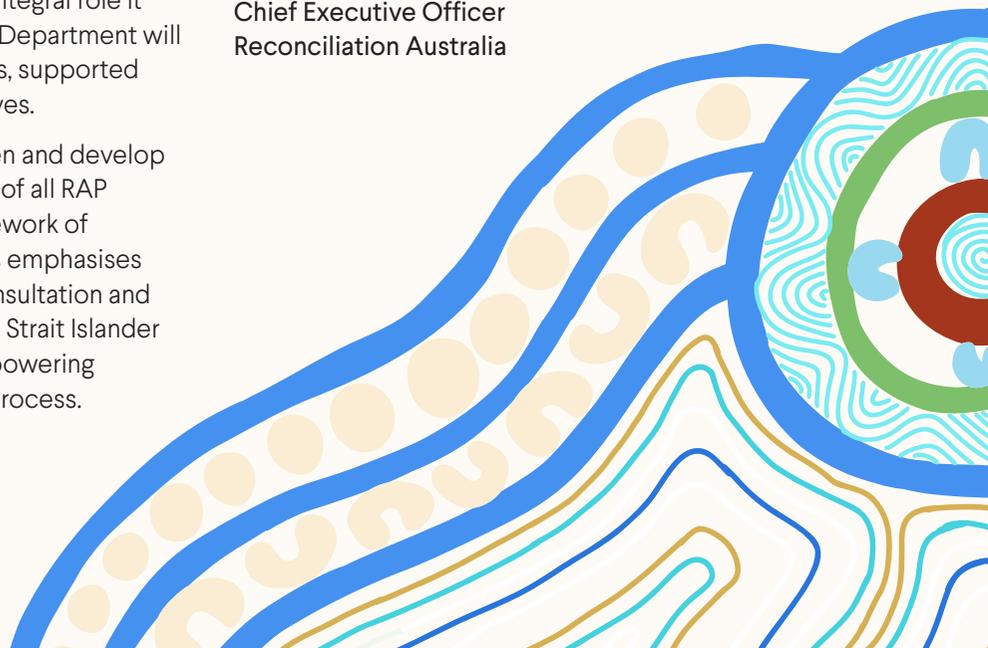
With close to three million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. The Department is part of a strong network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals the Department's readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia





Message from the Director General

On behalf of the Department, the Western Australian Planning Commission, Heritage Council of Western Australia, Pastoral Lands Board, Aboriginal Lands Trust, the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Council, and the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee, I am pleased to present our joint Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan March 2023 to February 2025 (RAP).

The State Government is embarking on significant reforms to respect the rights, heritage and voices of Aboriginal people in our society. On behalf of all Western Australians, the Department is playing a key role in delivering historic legislative, regulatory and policy reforms that will significantly improve the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage, ensure land is rightfully vested with Traditional Owners, support Aboriginal people to care for and manage their land, and provide for truth telling as part of our State's history.

Our new Innovate RAP captures our commitment and responsibility in each of these areas and provides for further initiatives to continue identifying opportunities and improving outcomes for Aboriginal peoples. We are committed to increasing employment of Aboriginal people and supporting training for Aboriginal youth and emerging leaders, improving cultural awareness amongst staff, and supporting new supplier arrangements for emerging and established Aboriginal businesses.

We value the unique perspectives and experiences of one of the oldest living cultures in the world.

This Innovate RAP is a fundamental statement of our continued commitment to reconciliation and effective service provision between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Western Australian communities, our staff and stakeholders as we work together to provide a culturally safe and inclusive environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I endorse this document as our next step in working together for a just, equitable and reconciled Australia.

Anthony Kannis PSM
Director General
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage





The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, Western Australian Planning Commission, Heritage Council of Western Australia, Pastoral Lands Board, Aboriginal Lands Trust, Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Council acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples of Western Australia as the Traditional Custodians of this land and its waterways and we pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

Introduction

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (the Department) embarked on a journey of learning and commitment to providing a safe, inclusive work environment with the commencement of its Reflect RAP in October 2019. Under this plan, the Department committed to supporting staff to grow their knowledge and understanding of the reconciliation process and find shared knowledge and experiences to facilitate a culturally-responsive service delivery model. The Reflect RAP provided the framework for the Department's staff and key stakeholders to come together to identify opportunities to advance reconciliation in Western Australia.

With the successful implementation of the Reflect RAP, we are ready to move to the next stage of our reconciliation journey, building on the outcomes from the Reflect RAP to implement innovative strategies to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The development of the Innovate RAP was a collaborative process, led by the Department's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group and including contribution from the Department's Aboriginal staff as well as business areas with responsibility for delivering services to or for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

About the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage

The Department plans and manages land and heritage for all Western Australians in order to conserve our past, protect our unique landscapes, nurture the present and plan for the future. The Department is responsible for State-level land use planning and management, Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage.

We plan how to make best use of the State's natural and built assets for the sustainable and responsible development of all Western Australian communities, through evidence-based research, integrated policy development and stakeholder engagement. Our key focus areas are:

- Aboriginal heritage and land management
- State land administration
- Cultural heritage conservation services
- Integrated land and infrastructure policy development
- Land use planning and policy development
- Land asset management.

The Department's sphere of influence extends deeply throughout Western Australian communities across the State, including local and remote Aboriginal communities, State and local government agencies, developers, pastoralists, industry groups and sectors. The Department is based in the Perth CBD with regional offices in Geraldton, Broome, Mandurah, Bunbury, Kalgoorlie, Kununurra, South Hedland and Albany.

As at February 2023, the Department has around 988 staff including 28 (3.8 per cent of the Department's workforce) Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees.

The Department is responsible for planning Western Australia's communities and managing our land and heritage assets. We manage State land assets for strategic State projects and facilitate the use and development of land for the benefit of current and future generations.

The Department supports the following statutory boards and committees:

Heritage Council of Western Australia – is responsible for statutory functions under the *Heritage Act 2018*. The Department undertakes most of the Heritage Council's day-to-day operations, projects and service delivery, under an agreed delegation framework.

Western Australian Planning Commission – a statutory authority under the *Planning and Development Act 2005* with state-wide responsibility for planning for future community development. The Department provides professional and technical expertise, administrative services and corporate resources to assist in the Commission's decision-making.

Pastoral Lands Board – a statutory authority established under section 94 of the *Land Administration Act 1997* with responsibility to the Minister for Lands for administering Western Australia's pastoral leases.

Aboriginal Lands Trust – is established under the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972* and is a significant land holder with responsibility for approximately 22 million hectares or about 8.7 per cent of the State's land mass. The Trust provides significant economic and investment opportunities for Aboriginal peoples.

Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee – established under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* to evaluate places and objects of importance to Aboriginal communities and make recommendations to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on matters related to these places and objects. The Committee will share responsibility for Aboriginal cultural heritage until the 1972 Act is repealed.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Council – established under the new *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* to provide a modern framework for the recognition, protection, conservation and preservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The Department is committed to working alongside Aboriginal peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the land, by caring for and protecting the Country that sustains us. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We engage with Aboriginal peoples across the State, in the negotiation of benefits associated with Native Title agreements and partnerships, working collaboratively with Traditional Owners to deliver outcomes that align with the land aspirations of the respective communities.

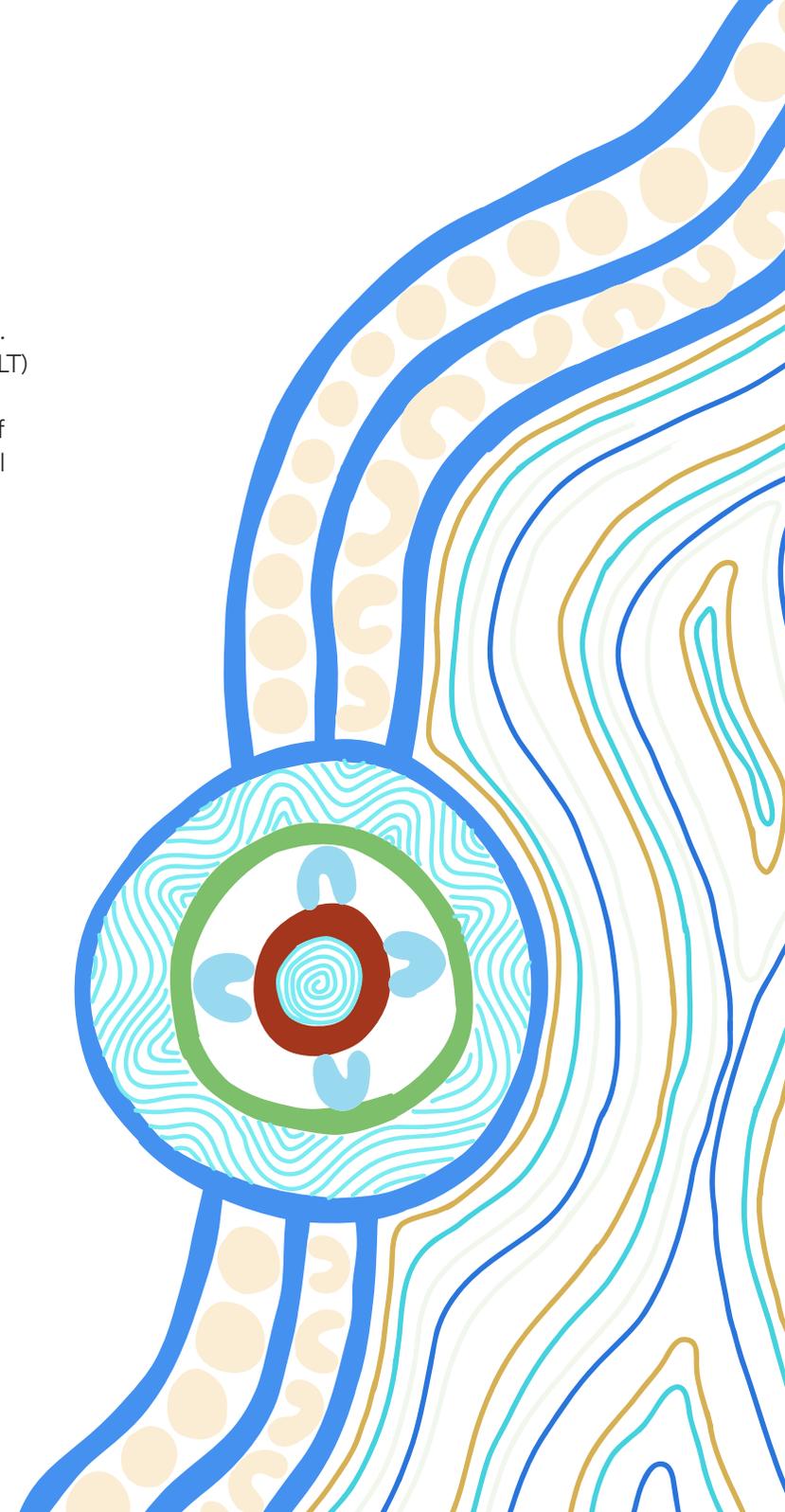
These agreements include the recently registered State significant South West Settlement and Yamatji Nation Agreement. The South West Settlement is the most comprehensive Native Title agreement negotiated in Australian history. It involves around 30,000 Noongar people and covers approximately 200,000 square kilometres in the South West region of Western Australia. A fundamental component of the Settlement is the recognition of the Noongar people as the Traditional Owners of the South West region of the State. The Settlement will provide Noongar people with sustainable assets and options for delivering long-term economic, social and community outcomes.

While the Department's work impacts all Western Australians, there are parts of our business that directly impact Aboriginal peoples. Specifically, the Department is responsible for protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage and serves a regulatory role with matters of compliance under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 (AHA 1972). The *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act* was passed by Parliament in 2021, representing a significant step towards delivering better protection for Aboriginal cultural heritage in Western Australia and achieving equity in the relationship between Aboriginal peoples, proponents and Government. A three phase co-design process was undertaken throughout 2022 for the development of key regulations and statutory guidelines required for implementation of the new Act.

The new Act is expected to come into effect on 1 July 2023, giving Aboriginal people a direct say in the management and protection of their cultural heritage.

The Department assists with the provision of appropriate land tenure as a means of delivering increased economic development, job opportunities and improved social outcomes for Aboriginal peoples. This includes supporting the Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT) by facilitating divestment of land currently under its ownership or management (ALT estate). Divestment of the ALT estate is central to increasing direct Aboriginal control of land to strengthen communities, fostering economic activities and securing improved outcomes for Aboriginal peoples.

We also administer the Preserve, Promote and Protect Aboriginal sites grants program, which offers financial support to Aboriginal not-for-profit organisations to undertake projects that protect and preserve Aboriginal heritage sites and objects. The program allows recipients to complete a variety of works to protect and better manage sites that hold cultural heritage significance, as well as promote greater cultural understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal heritage to all Western Australians.





Stunning landscapes in Tjiwarl country

Our purpose

The Department plans and manages land and heritage for all Western Australians.

Our vision

To respect the past
Create opportunities today
Plan for the future

Our values

Our corporate values and guiding principles inform our behaviour at work, our decision-making, how we engage with stakeholders, our conduct and our performance.

Respect

We respect that our work is personal to our stakeholders and that every piece of land and site has a story. We protect and value the land in Western Australia and strive to enhance connections to people, places and our history.

We listen and learn from the stories of our past and aspirations for the future as we plan for growth and development. We respect the Traditional Owners, the knowledge of Elders and our local Aboriginal histories. We carry this respect into our workplace and recognise the value of diversity and individual perspectives. We work with kindness and inclusiveness, ensuring that we treat each other with fairness, dignity and understanding.

Collaboration

We engage and collaborate to build prosperous places and connected communities. We engage with people, groups and organisations to share ideas, solve problems and plan for the future.

We empower each other by sharing and leveraging our knowledge and resources to find creative solutions and resolve problems. Through collaboration, we learn from others, build support networks and develop confidence to step outside our comfort zone and conventional boundaries.

Integrity

Our ethics and integrity guide our actions with every piece of land, site and opportunity to enable us to deliver great outcomes for Western Australia.

Our decision-making and policies are based on sound planning, lands and heritage principles and practice. We assess proposals on their merit, consistently and free from bias. When we work with our stakeholders, we are accountable and transparent, and we take responsibility for our actions and decisions. We lead by example with credibility and a focus on a strong public service ethic. We uphold the public sector Code of Ethics in our work and all interactions with our colleagues and stakeholders.

Innovation

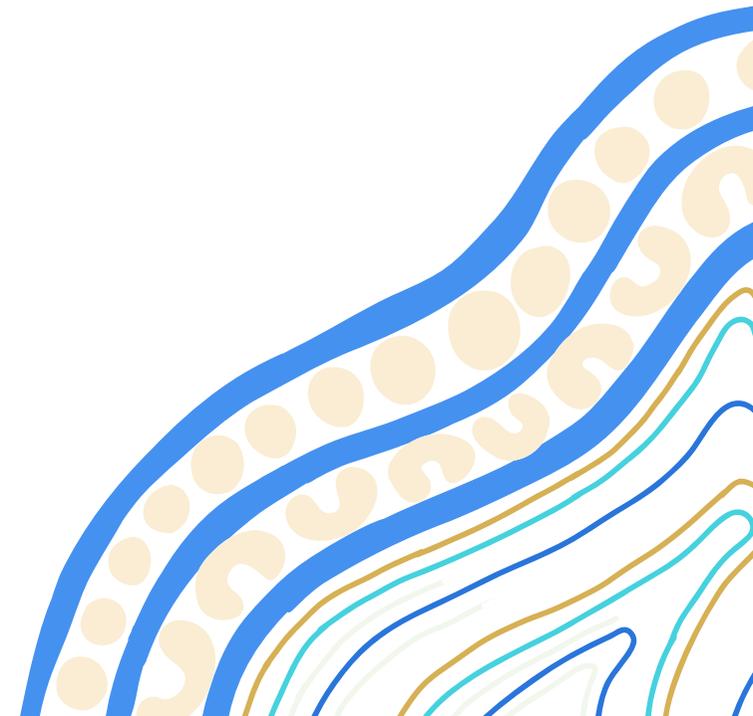
We enable innovation, implementing innovative approaches to the way we work to create value for our stakeholders.

We respond to the economic, demographic and environmental challenges facing our State with new thinking and approaches to planning and managing land and heritage. By incorporating design thinking and an outcomes-based approach, we enable the creation of connected communities and prosperous places. We think creatively and embrace technology to provide a better digital experience for our stakeholders – enabling positive change and delivering excellent service.

Professionalism

Our professionalism empowers us to use our specialised knowledge and skills to deliver our work to the highest standards.

Our lifelong commitment to professional development and training enables us to model best practice approaches to planning, land management and heritage. We empower our workforce to be their best by enhancing our capability, embracing continuous improvement and sharing learnings with colleagues. We are reliable and can be counted on to get things done, remaining poised and professional in all situations. Our customers receive excellent service from us at all times.



Case Study 1

Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA)

The historic Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement (Yamatji Nation agreement), which is set to deliver almost half a billion dollars to the Yamatji community and covers more than 48,000 square kilometres of land in the Mid West, was executed on 24 February 2020 and conclusively registered on 26 October 2020.

The Yamatji Nation agreement includes a comprehensive package of benefits to ensure self-determination and long-term economic independence for the people of the Yamatji Nation and comprises the following components: economic development opportunities, funding, cultural heritage protection measures, Crown land, conservation estate areas, recognition of Native Title, housing, governance, as well as access to water.

Acknowledging the importance of land to the people of the Yamatji Nation, the benefits package includes the creation of the Yamatji Land Estate from approximately 150,000 hectares of Crown land to be transferred in freehold, conditional freehold and managed reserve; and the creation of the Yamatji Conservation Estate comprising approximately 690,000 hectares, including new and existing conservation park and national park areas and some jointly-managed areas. The package also includes funding for business development, the transfer of commercial land, joint ventures, tourism opportunities and access to housing properties for sale, leasing or development.

The Department is responsible for implementing commitments under this agreement relating to Crown land and Aboriginal cultural heritage. The Department will oversee the Yamatji Government Standard Heritage Agreements that must be entered into by State Government departments and agencies when undertaking activities in the agreement area. The Department and the Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation will establish a Yamatji Heritage Working Group for the collaborative management and shared responsibilities of Aboriginal heritage including:

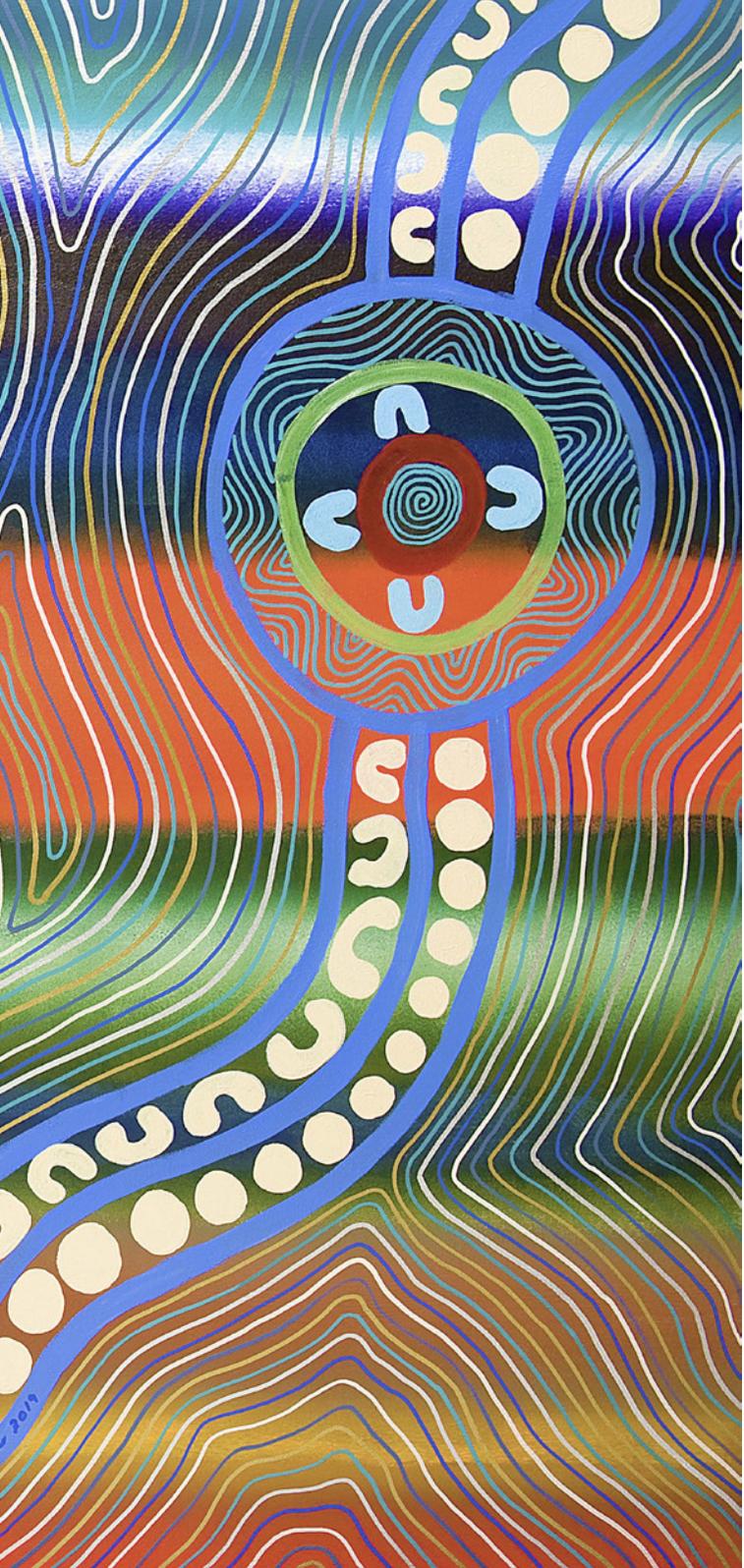
- Increasing the overall understanding of Yamatji heritage values and developing management tools that align with these values.
- Prioritising management planning of Aboriginal sites of high importance and significance to the people of the Yamatji Nation.
- Preparing local and regional heritage management plans within the settlement area.
- Building the capacity of the Yamatji community to engage in Yamatji heritage management.
- Providing advice on the development of Aboriginal heritage training and employment initiatives within the agreement area.

The agreement includes an acknowledgement of the people of the Yamatji Nation's connection to the land and recognises the traditional laws and customs that guide their cultural responsibility to the land. The agreement recognises the diversity of all the identity groups that make up the Yamatji Nation and acknowledges that this land was, and always will be, Yamatji country.





Stunning landscapes in Tijiwarl country



Our reconciliation journey so far

The Department's Reflect RAP marked the first stage of our reconciliation journey, providing a framework to identify strategies that advance reconciliation within the Department. We recognise reconciliation is a process that requires building respectful, transparent and honest relationships. In developing the Reflect RAP we embarked on a journey of learning and made a commitment to providing a safe, inclusive work environment that values the diversity and individual skill sets and abilities of our people.

Our Reflect RAP provided the framework to come together to identify the many opportunities we have as individuals and as a Department to advance reconciliation. The RAP Working Group collaborated to oversee implementation of the RAP and to bring their hearts, hands and minds to organising activities and finding connections between what we do in our business that contributes to this journey, and the broader goals of the reconciliation movement. All Reflect RAP actions were achieved.

Although COVID-19 impacted our ability to host events, the RAP Working Group explored alternative ways to engage with staff. As part of National Reconciliation Week 2020, we shared a daily recommendation from our 'RAP Recommends' directory as a way of connecting with peers across the agency on common interests and themes. RAP Recommends is a user-friendly directory developed by the RAP Working Group to make it easier for people to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and increase participation in reconciliation activities throughout the year. The directory is categorised by activity, providing a useful guide for events, movies, documentaries, books and music to create a higher level of knowledge, and pride in, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions.

The NAIDOC Week 2020 theme of *Always was, Always will be* is integral to our core business of land use management, planning and heritage conservation. As part of the week, the Department came together with multiple agencies to reflect on the NAIDOC theme. The event was led by two proud Noongar women from the RAP Working Group who presented a diverse line up of guests including a Welcome to Noongar Country; music by a Yawuru, Nyul Nyul and Yamatji singer; a dance performance that represented the continuation of Aboriginal cultural practices by the talented Djurpin Djindas (happy stars) - who range in age from five to 12 years - and a presentation from the Director General of the Department.

In 2021, the Department again collaborated with other agencies to mark the theme for National Reconciliation Week *More than a word. Reconciliation takes action*. The joint agency event included a keynote address by Carol Innes, Co-Chair of Reconciliation WA, who gave a thought-provoking speech about how colonisation has affected the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the importance of moving forward together to reconcile what has happened in the past. As part of the Department's internally run events for NAIDOC Week 2021, the RAP Working Group facilitated a presentation from the Department's Manager of Heritage Conservation on the importance of Truth Telling to support reconciliation and cultural healing. The presentation covered some of the sites that form part of the Sites of Truth Telling project which seeks to enable truth and healing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in WA and is included as part of our RAP.

As part of NAIDOC Week 2021, the Department's two Aboriginal trainees were interviewed to shine a light on some of the stories and insights of our Aboriginal employees and what NAIDOC Week meant to them. One of the trainees, a proud Noongar and Yamatji woman with ties to the Ballardong Country (North East of Perth), Whadjuk (Perth), Murchison and Gascoyne regions of Western Australia, said it was a time for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to reflect and share their stories – *“coming together as one to look at the past and present and acknowledging our ancestors and spiritual connection with land. (It's about) sharing our stories and keeping our culture strong.”* A Whadjuk Noongar woman with ties to the Wilman region, our second Aboriginal trainee, delivered a presentation on Noongar Lore providing an overview of Noongar words and phrases, significant Noongar sites, Noongar totems and the Dreamtime story of the Rainbow Serpent.

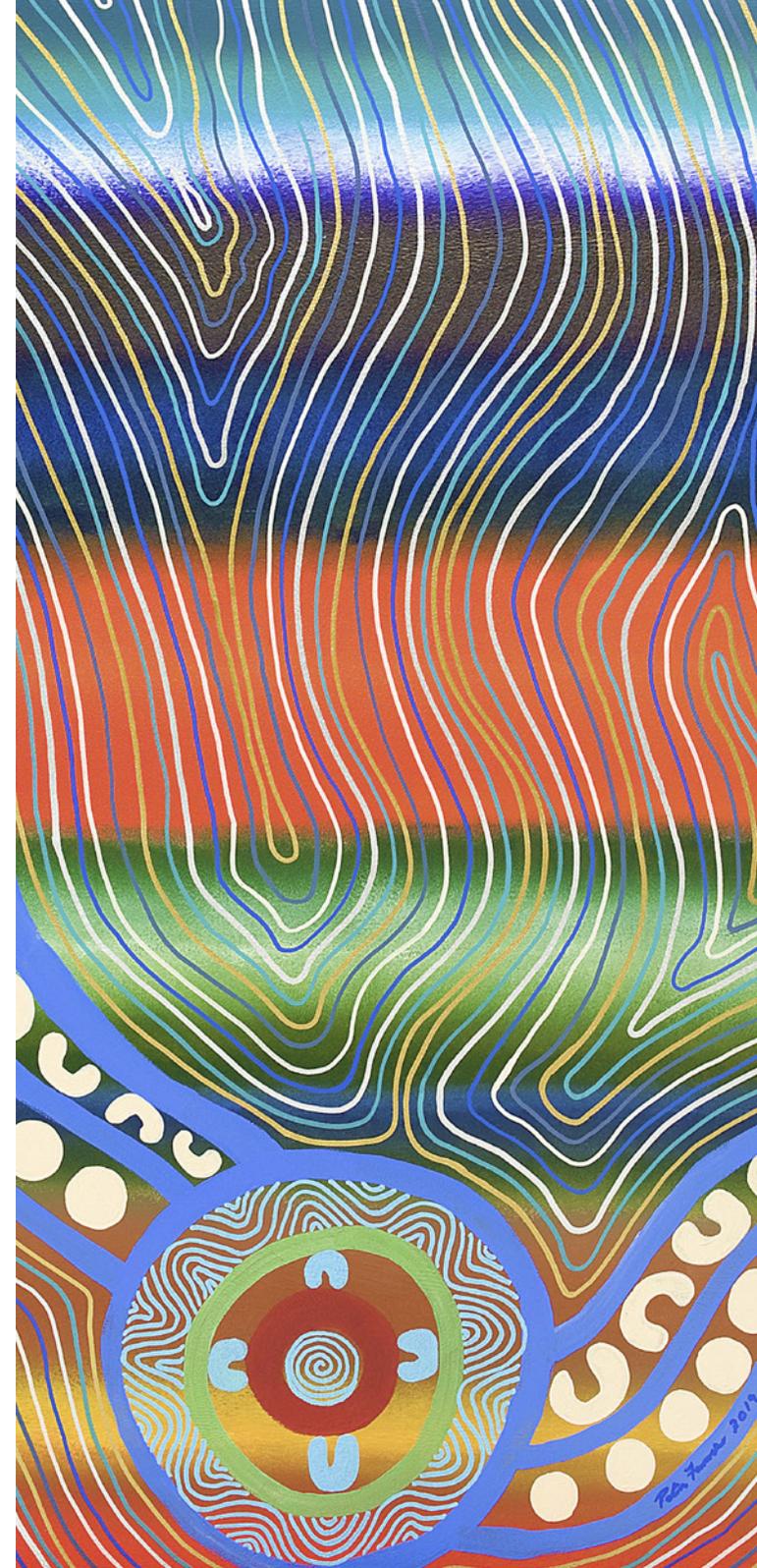
Other key achievements of the Department's reconciliation journey to date include:

- Establishment of Welcome to Country and Acknowledging Traditional Owners of Country protocols and procedures. These are in place across the Department.
- Development of an Aboriginal Engagement Toolkit to improve cultural competency across the Department and assist employees in providing culturally appropriate services and meaningful engagement with the community.
- Development of a Multicultural Action Plan which sets out the Department's approach to embracing cultural diversity by delivering accessible and culturally appropriate programs and services.
- A dedicated Aboriginal and Diversity Manager position has also been established and filled.

- Commitment to increasing understanding, recognition and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning, including the continued implementation of cultural awareness training for all staff.
- Commitment to improving employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through initiatives such as the Aboriginal Traineeship Program, the establishment of workforce diversification targets and strategies, and by providing opportunities for leadership development for Aboriginal employees.
- The Department exceeded all targets under the Western Australian Aboriginal Procurement Policy, aimed at awarding contracts to businesses registered on the Aboriginal Business Directory or the Supply Nation Indigenous Business Directory.
- Social staff events organised by the RAP Working Group including quiz nights, book swaps, guest speakers and performers at events, and the launch of our RAP artwork to provide less formal avenues for staff engagement with Aboriginal culture.
- Partnering with other Government agencies and Aboriginal peoples and organisations to coordinate events in celebration and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



2022 DPLH Regional Heritage Officer meeting



Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is for our land and places to acknowledge, celebrate and protect the rich histories of local Aboriginal cultures; to see all First Nations people thriving from opportunity and to see all of our employees building strong, collaborative relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We strive to deliver social, economic and cultural outcomes that empower Aboriginal peoples, businesses and organisations; ensure the voice of First Nations people is heard and respected; and support the integration of Aboriginal cultures to build stronger communities across Western Australia.

Our RAP

Led by our RAP Champion (the Director General, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage), our Innovate RAP March 2023 to February 2025 outlines the actions that the Department will take towards achieving our vision for reconciliation.

It provides the foundation to come together and leverage the many opportunities we have as individuals and as an organisation to advance reconciliation in Western Australia. An example of this is the systematic inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in mainstream planning and development initiatives. This ensures projects take a holistic view of the communities they affect and service, while considering the diversity of views within these communities.

Importantly, our RAP will lift the Department's focus from reflection and awareness-raising to aspirational and innovative – empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by using the lens of reconciliation to better understand our core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders. It will drive a deeper understanding of pilot, innovative strategies that can assist in improving access to and delivery of the Department's services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We recognise the importance of linking our past to the present and understanding the ongoing impacts of past policies and practices on contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities as we work together to build a brighter future.

The RAP Working Group was established for the purpose of bringing together Aboriginal and non-Indigenous staff to provide ongoing management and oversight of the RAP, including progress tracking and reporting. The RAP Working Group includes Aboriginal employees and representatives from each of the business units across the Department – 14 in total, to ensure we have the right leadership and a diversity of input from across the organisation. A list of the current RAP Working Group members is included as Appendix 1.

Our Innovate RAP March 2023 to February 2025 has been prepared by the Department's RAP Working Group through consultation with staff from all business areas across the organisation. Key initiatives have been assigned to senior leaders within relevant business areas, noting that broad collaboration will be required to achieve the following actions:

Relationships - how the Department will strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Respect - how the Department's respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, lands, waters, histories and rights will be demonstrated in our core business activities.

Opportunities - how the Department's employment, procurement, professional development and consultative processes will create or improve opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Governance - how the Department will achieve cohesion across business areas, and monitor and report publicly on progress and achievements.

Relationships

Relationships are a fundamental underpinning of the partnership approach we take in all aspects of our work through understanding and respectful stakeholder engagement.

Land is at the heart of connection to country and central to the partnerships that we grow with Aboriginal peoples. We believe that Aboriginal peoples are best placed to manage their cultural heritage and it is through our relationships that we drive long-term social, cultural and economic opportunities. Our core values and appreciation of respect, collaboration, and professionalism provide the basis of our relationships and our reconciliation journey as an organisation.

Case Study 2 Aboriginal Engagement Toolkit

Two of the Department's Reflect RAP commitments related to increasing understanding of protocols and establishing good practices that support relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations (Aboriginal Engagement Toolkit), and the creation of a calendar of dates that reflect significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander milestones throughout history to the present day (Aboriginal History Timeline).

To achieve these commitments, the RAP Working Group consulted across the Department to establish a toolkit that would enable staff to better plan, conduct and follow up on engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

The Aboriginal Engagement Toolkit has been developed to improve cultural competency across the Department and assist employees in providing culturally appropriate services and meaningful engagement with the community.

The toolkit creates greater certainty and support for officers to engage competently and respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. It acknowledges that engagement practices vary by region and, noting this presents a risk of offending stakeholders, emphasises the importance of understanding regional differences and engaging with regional employees to mitigate these risks.

Case Study 3 Aboriginal Heritage Management Plan

Fremantle Prison, which is managed by the Department, has impacted Aboriginal peoples in Western Australia, both as a colonial site that resulted in the displacement of Traditional Owners, and as a site of incarceration. The Prison is in the Walyalup area on Whadjuk Country.

In August 2021, Fremantle Prison embarked on a two-year project of research and delivery of the Aboriginal Heritage Management Plan. Fremantle Prison has engaged and worked closely with Walyalup Elders to develop the scope for its plan. In addition, input and participation was sought from the wider Aboriginal community. A number of sessions were held by an Aboriginal facilitation service to understand what traditional, historical and contemporary cultural values Fremantle Prison holds for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the State, noting that different nation groups were imprisoned at the site and how to respectfully share these values.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Action 1: Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.		
1.1 Develop and implement an engagement and consultation plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Feb 2024	Director, Strategic Stakeholder Engagement
1.2 Improve Aboriginal engagement practices across work streams and divisions of the Department.	Feb 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
1.3 Embed best practice Aboriginal engagement principles and practices with Aboriginal stakeholders and Traditional Owners across all divisions of the Department to ensure a consistent, effective and inclusive approach to engagement and consultation.	Feb 2024	Director, Strategic Stakeholder Engagement
1.4 Collaborate with employees to ensure meaningful and effective engagement, consultation and co-design with Aboriginal people, industry and stakeholders through applying and communicating our learnings from the Aboriginal Engagement Toolkit.	Mar 2023	Chair, RAP Working Group
Action 2: Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).		
2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our employees.	April 2023, 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
2.2 RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	July 2023, 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
2.3 Encourage and support employees and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	July 2023, 2024	Corporate Executive
2.4 Organise at least one internal NRW event/activity each year.	July 2023, 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
2.5 Register relevant internal NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	June 2023, 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
2.6 Extend an invitation to internal and external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to share their reconciliation experiences or stories as part of our internal events/activities.	July 2023, 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
Action 3: Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.		
3.1 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation on all Department publications.	Mar 2023	Director, Communications and Engagement
3.2 Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	Mar 2023	Chair, RAP Working Group
3.3 Collaborate with the RAP network and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.	May 2023	Chair, RAP Working Group
3.4 Support Reconciliation WA through ongoing Tier 2 membership and promotion of Reconciliation WA events.	June 2023, 2024	Manager, Office of the Director General

Relationships

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Action 4: Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.		
4.1 Conduct a review of Human Resources policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	Mar 2023	Director, Governance and Performance
4.2 Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	May 2023	Director, Governance and Performance
4.3 Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	May 2023	Director, Governance and Performance
4.4 Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	May 2023	Director, Human Resources
Action 5: Build internal engagement with reconciliation.		
5.1 Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	Mar 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
5.2 Establish a dedicated resource to provide support across business areas and connect officers to information, tools and contacts to raise awareness, build understanding and encourage leadership from all employees to advance reconciliation.	Mar 2023	Director, Human Resources
5.3 Create and maintain key reconciliation stakeholder information for the Department.	Mar 2023	Manager, Government Relations
5.4 Maintain a centralised service, providing advice to leaders, employees and business areas on Aboriginal engagement and information on Native Title, Aboriginal culture and heritage and effective engagement.	May 2023	Manager, Office of the Director General

Respect

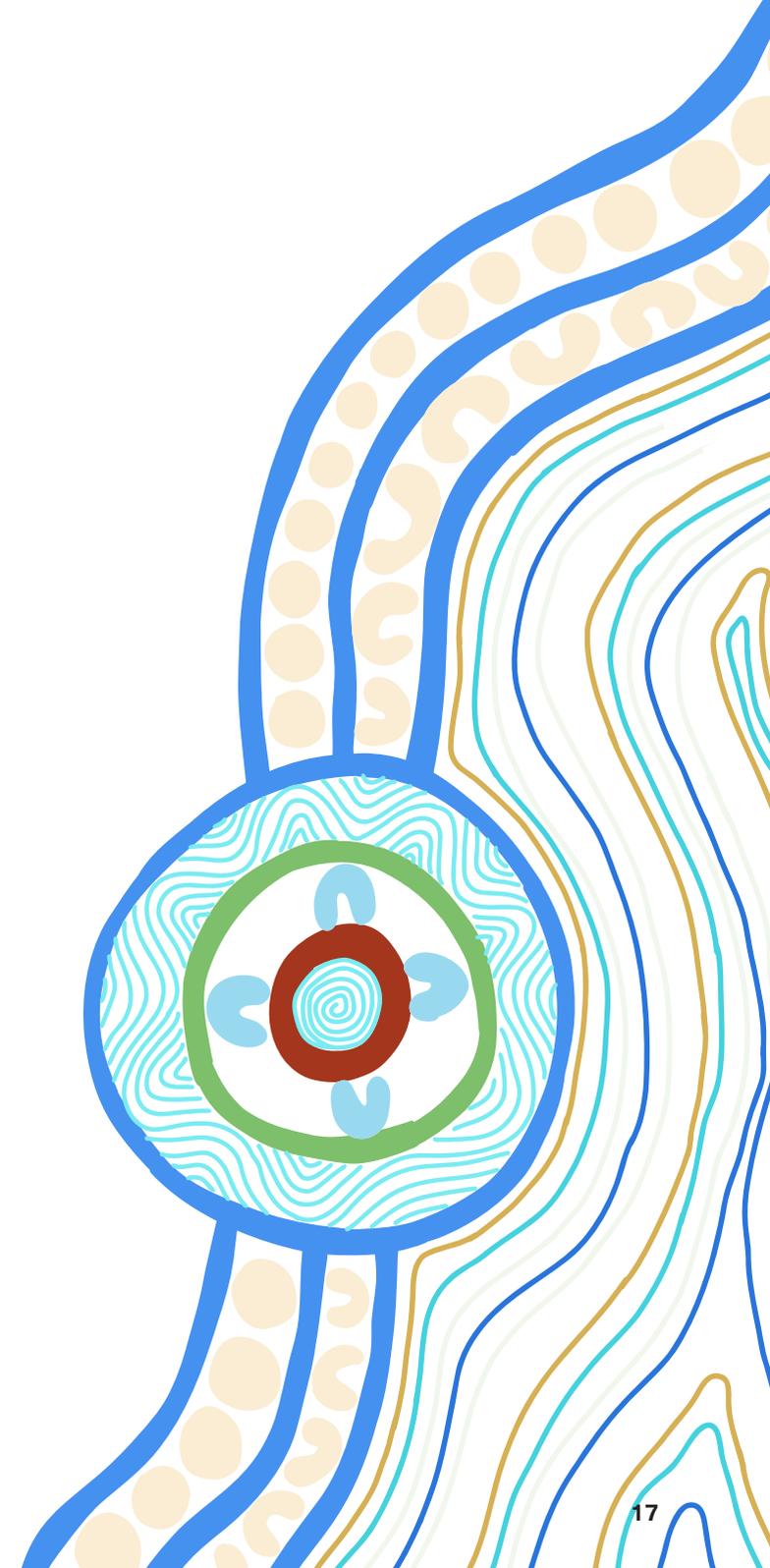
Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and traditions is crucial for the development of strong relationships. We protect and value the land in Western Australia and strive to enhance connections to people, places and our history. This places an obligation to build understanding of culture and appreciation of traditional knowledge and connection to country. We respect the Traditional Owners, the knowledge of Elders and our local Aboriginal history. We carry this respect into our workplace and recognise the value of diversity and individual perspectives. We work with kindness and inclusiveness, ensuring that we treat each other with fairness, dignity and understanding.

Case Study 4 *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021*

Between 2020 and 2021, the Department continued to support development of the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* (the Act) to reform how Aboriginal cultural heritage is identified, managed and conserved in Western Australia. The Act replaces the outdated *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* with modern legislation that presents a transformative, contemporary and respectful vision for the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage. The Act introduces key reforms such as mandating informed consent without coercion, recognising intangible heritage and scrapping a controversial (Section 18) approvals process.

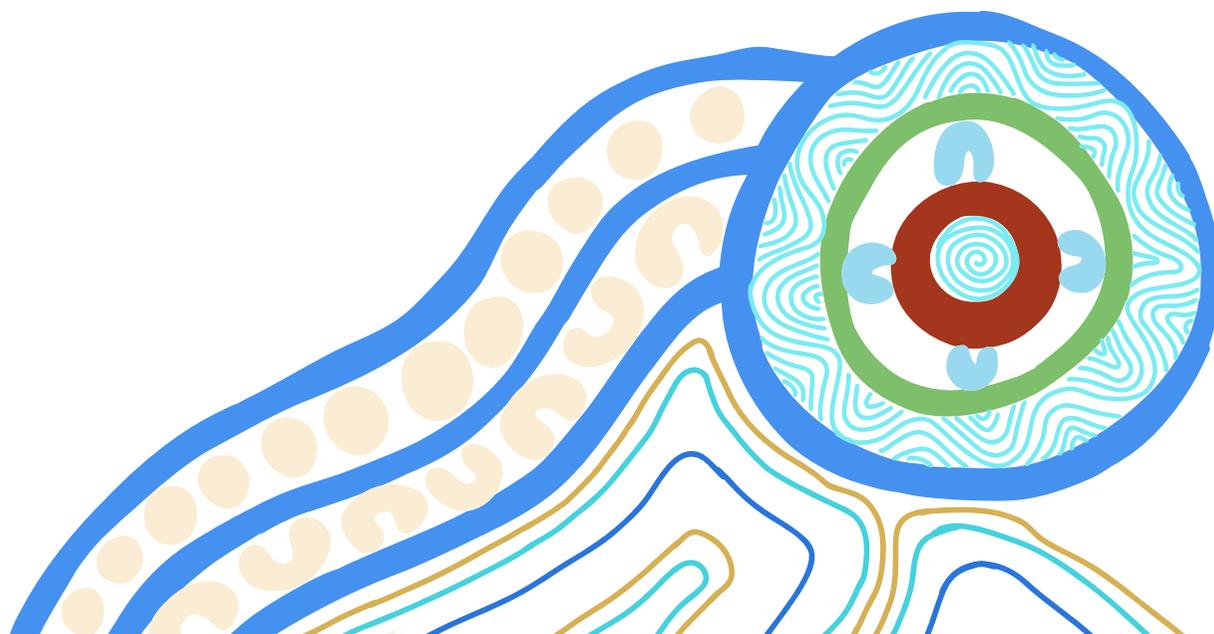
Key enablers of the new legislation will include regulations, a management code and other supporting documents. In March 2022, the State Government launched a 12-month co-design process, developed by the Department to develop the guidance material that will underpin the new laws. The co-design process reflects the Department's approach to respectful engagement through partnerships. Co-design is a collaborative approach focused on finding common ground, respecting the expertise of all participants and creating an environment that allows all participants to shape and influence the final product.

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Reference Group, comprising of two Aboriginal members, an industry and government representative, governed the co-design process prior to the establishment of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Council. This ensured it was delivered in an inclusive and culturally appropriate manner.



Respect

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Action 6: Build pathways for Aboriginal peoples to control their cultural heritage throughout WA.		
6.1 Improve assistance offered to Aboriginal stakeholders and Traditional Owner groups in methods and processes of recording Aboriginal heritage to promote protection of significant sites.	Mar 2024	Registrar, Aboriginal Heritage Sites
6.2 Assist and collaborate with Aboriginal communities and relevant stakeholders in repatriating ancestral remains and traditional objects able to be returned to Country.	Jul 2024	Director, Stakeholder Engagement (Heritage and Property Services)
Action 7: Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.		
7.1 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our Department.	May 2023	Director, Human Resources
7.2 Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our employees on the advice of, and through, consultation with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors.	May 2023	Director, Human Resources
7.3 Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership employees to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	May 2023	Chair, RAP Working Group
7.4 Investigate local cultural experiences and immersion opportunities for staff.	May 2023	Chair, RAP Working Group with RAP Working Group Members



Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Action 8: Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols, languages and dates of cultural significance.		
8.1 Continue to communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	Mar 2023	Director, Governance and Performance
8.2 Engage local Traditional Owners or Custodians to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	July 2023, 2024	Manager, Office of the Director General
8.3 Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	Jan 2024 (reported quarterly)	Director General Board and Committee Chairs
8.4 Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships.	Mar 2023	Manager, Government Relations
8.5 Encourage employees to include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all meetings.	Jan 2024 (reported quarterly)	Manager, Office of the Director General
8.6 Maintain and promote a calendar of significant dates and events for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	March 2023, 2024	Manager, Office of the Director General
8.7 Embed Native Title, heritage and other cultural information in reports and documents relating to land (including land parcels, land policy and planning frameworks).	Mar 2024	Director, Data and Analytics
8.8 Develop cultural maps that capture Native Title, language and family groups.	Mar 2024	Director, Data and Analytics
8.9 Establish signage in our facilities that recognise the Traditional Owners of the area.	May 2023	Facilities and Accommodation Coordinator and DPLH Regional Offices
8.10 Respectfully preserve Aboriginal heritage and stories of the Fremantle Prison and prepare an Aboriginal Heritage Management Plan.	Jan 2024	Director, Fremantle Prison
8.11 Establish an Aboriginal Reference Group with guidance from the Walyalup Reconciliation Action Plan Reference Group and Elders group.	Jan 2024	Director, Fremantle Prison

Respect

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Action 9: Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.		
9.1 Promote, encourage and support participation in internal and external NAIDOC events to all employees.	July 2023, 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
9.2 Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week.	July 2023, 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
9.3 All RAP Working Group members to participate in at least one external NAIDOC Week event each year.	July 2023, 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
Action 10: Improve the accessibility of our services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.		
10.1 Review forms, documents and online materials to ensure accessibility and usability.	Sep 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group, RAP Working Group – Divisional Representatives
10.2 Ensure all primary forms, documentation and engagement channels for the Department (including Crown Land Enquiry Form, ALT Leasing Form, MRS Form 1, Application Form 1A for Subdivision) are reviewed to assess accessibility and usability.	Nov 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group, RAP Working Group – Divisional Representatives
10.3 Identify alternative methods for collecting input on submissions (such as verbal, video, audio recordings).	Sep 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
10.4 Design alternative engagement processes to accommodate verbal or other forms of collecting input and communicating Department outcomes and decisions.	Aug 2023	Chair, RAP Working Group
10.5 Review whether methods of collecting information related to Aboriginal stakeholders are meeting the needs of Aboriginal communities (balancing the requirements of the Department with accessibility of forms for submission processes).	Nov 2023	Chair, RAP Working Group
Action 11: Continue to progress the Sites of Truth Telling project to enable truth and healing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in WA.		
11.1 Complete initial consultation with community organisations and form partnerships with relevant agencies and organisations.	June 2024	Executive Director, Heritage Services
11.2 Conduct initial review of properties in Western Australia that would have potential for inclusion in the serial property.	June 2024	Executive Director, Heritage Services
11.3 Develop a formal project plan and stakeholder engagement strategy.	June 2024	Executive Director, Heritage Services

Opportunities

The Department provides planning, land and heritage services across the State, with officers based in regional areas who provide services directly to Aboriginal peoples, organisations and communities in those regions. We strive to engage Aboriginal peoples in the identification and management of Aboriginal land and heritage, and to procure services from Aboriginal businesses where possible. The Department strives to be recognised as an employer of choice through creating employment, career progression and economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and businesses.

Case Study 5 *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972 amendments and the ALT Divestment Program*

The Department is currently consulting on proposed amendments to the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972* (AAPA Act 1972) which seek to address barriers to divestment and create better alignment with contemporary policies and legislation. Changes will remove limitations and improve the Department's ability to manage and divest the ALT estate.

The proposed amendments seek to create social, cultural and economic opportunities for Aboriginal peoples by helping to maximise opportunities for Aboriginal land ownership and management, economic activity and improved outcomes.

Specific changes will streamline the divestment of reserved lands, including allowing them to be returned to Aboriginal people, replace outdated terms and more clearly define consultation requirements for stakeholders and the ALT. The proposed legislative changes will support the Department's ALT Divestment Program to achieve a 2017 State Government commitment to divest the entire ALT estate into the direct control of Aboriginal people and entities by March 2025.

The diverse nature of land comprising the ALT estate requires flexible decision-making and tailored divestment options focused on achieving the social, cultural, heritage and/or economic outcomes identified by the Aboriginal interest holders for each parcel of land. The Department ensures the land is fit for the intended purpose, including the appropriate tenure and any required remediation, prior to transfer.

In 2019, the Department received \$5.8 million over four years (2019-20 to 2022-23) to facilitate the divestment of 33 priority ALT properties in the areas of remediation and repair; surveys, audits and inspections; and agreements and engagements. The Department actively monitors the priority list to adapt to the evolving environment and to ensure funding is targeted and prioritised to those properties most likely to be divested in the short-term.

Additional focus properties were added to the ALT divestment program where work is underway on divestment options, consultation and remediation; consolidating efforts across a number of short, medium and long-term divestments to ensure the continued reduction in the size of the ALT estate. There are currently 168 focus properties, with the Department working across a total of 201 properties. Since 2017, and as at 30 June 2022, 72 properties have been approved for divestment by the ALT Board and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and 11 properties have been transferred under the ALT divestment program.

Opportunities

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Action 12: Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.		
12.1 Continue to advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and review effectiveness annually.	Aug 2023, 2024	Aboriginal Employment and Diversity Manager
12.2 Annually review and update (as required) HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	Aug 2023, 2024	Aboriginal Employment and Diversity Manager
12.3 Continue to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff on the effectiveness of our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	Aug 2023, 2024	Aboriginal Employment and Diversity Manager
12.4 Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	Aug 2023, 2024	Aboriginal Employment and Diversity Manager
12.5 In collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	May 2023	Aboriginal Employment and Diversity Manager
12.6 Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees (5 per cent target).	Jan 2024	Director, Human Resources
12.7 Explore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on committees, boards, reference groups and panels.	May 2023	Manager, Office of the Director General
12.8 Maintain representation by a senior Aboriginal employee on the Corporate Executive team.	May 2023	Director General
12.9 Explore opportunities for engagement with schools and tertiary organisations to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes.	Mar 2023	Director, Human Resources
Action 13: Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.		
13.1 Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	Mar 2023	Chief Procurement Officer
13.2 Investigate new ways to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business owners.	Nov 2023	Chief Procurement Officer
13.3 Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to employees.	July 2024	Director, Communications and Engagement
13.4 Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Oct 2023	Chief Procurement Officer
13.5 Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	July 2024	Chief Procurement Officer
13.6 Continue to exceed State Government Aboriginal service procurement targets by awarding more than 4 per cent of awarded contracts for goods, services, community services and works to registered Aboriginal businesses. The Government Aboriginal Procurement Policy requires State agencies to award 3.5 per cent in 2022-23 and 4 per cent by 2023-24.	July 2023, 2024	Chief Procurement Officer

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Action 14: Provide opportunities for employees to improve Aboriginal Engagement skills.		
14.1 Consolidate and share the learnings from the Aboriginal Engagement activities across the Department.	May 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group
14.2 Increase knowledge and understanding of the work undertaken by the various divisions of the Department, for example, by providing information on projects.	May 2024	Chair, RAP Working Group; RAP Working Group – Divisional Representatives
14.3 Explore opportunities to enable employees to participate in Aboriginal engagement activities through employee mobility, for example, through position swaps between Perth-based officers and encouraging site visits on Country.	Nov 2023	Director, Human Resources
Action 15: Redress power imbalances and recognise the skills, roles and responsibilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls.		
15.1 Improve consultative practices that consider gender specific issues, the voices of Aboriginal women and girls.	May 2024	Director, Stakeholder Engagement (Heritage and Property Services) Director, Strategic Stakeholder Engagement
15.2 Strategise new ways to provide Aboriginal women and girls with opportunities for healing, empowerment and participation.	May 2024	Director, Stakeholder Engagement (Heritage and Property Services) Director, Strategic Stakeholder Engagement
15.3 Enhance opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls to participate in leadership and decision-making through supporting participation in leadership development programs, providing coaching and mentoring support for trainees, and facilitating career development opportunities through secondments, higher duty acting positions and promotions.	May 2024	Assistant Directors General, Business and Corporate Services

Governance, tracking progress and reporting

The Department reaffirms its commitment to ensure we maintain an effective system of governance through which the RAP Working Group drives implementation of our RAP. The key objective of the RAP Working Group is to actively manage the development, endorsement, publication and implementation of our RAP, providing ongoing management and oversight of RAP activities, including progress tracking and reporting. The RAP Working Group is governed by a Terms of Reference that ensures membership is representative of all business

areas across the organisation. The Department recently made changes to the governance arrangements of the RAP Working Group by transferring responsibility to the Office of the Director General to ensure leadership on RAP activities is driven from the highest level of the organisation. We also recently created and appointed to the position an Aboriginal Employment and Diversity Manager, reflecting our commitment to advance the Department's reconciliation journey.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Action 16: Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group to drive governance of the RAP.		
16.1 Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group.	Mar 2023 (reported quarterly)	Manager, Office of the Director General
16.2 Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group.	Mar 2023, 2024	Manager, Office of the Director General and Chair, RAP Working Group
16.3 Oversee the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.	Mar 2023	Manager, Office of the Director General and Chair, RAP Working Group
16.4 Meet at least six times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Mar 2023 (reported quarterly)	Chair, RAP Working Group
Action 17: Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.		
17.1 Define resources needed for RAP implementation.	Mar 2023, 2024	Manager, Office of the Director General
17.2 Engage our senior leaders and other employees in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Mar 2023 (reported quarterly)	Manager, Office of the Director General and Chair, RAP Working Group
17.3 Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Mar 2023	Manager, Office of the Director General and Chair, RAP Working Group
17.4 Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	Mar 2023	Director General

Governance, tracking progress and reporting

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Action 18: Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.		
18.1 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September (annually)	Manager, Office of the Director General
18.2 Report RAP progress to all employees and senior leaders quarterly.	April 2023, July 2023, Oct 2023, Jan 2024, April 2024, July 2024, Oct 2024, Jan 2025 and April 2025 (following completion of the Innovate RAP)	Manager, Office of the Director General
18.3 Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	Mar 2024, 2025	Manager, Office of the Director General
18.4 Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	Apr 2024	Manager, Office of the Director General
18.5 Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to ensure our primary and secondary contacts are current for receiving important correspondence.	Nov 2023, 2024	Manager, Office of the Director General
18.6 Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	Aug 2023, 2024	Manager, Office of the Director General
Action 19: Continue our reconciliation journey by developing the next stage, our Stretch RAP.		
19.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our Stretch RAP.	Jun 2024	Manager, Office of the Director General

Our RAP artwork

Artist Peter John Farmer II

A Mineng Whadjuk man from Gnowangerup, Western Australia, Peter believes art is an incredible tool that helps him break down barriers and builds understanding and an appreciation of his language and cultural belief systems. He works extensively throughout the State's educational systems, to help the wider communities understand the deep connectedness his people have to the environment and all of the flora and fauna that reside in it. He believes as his ancestors did, all life is to be valued and sustained in a way that is beneficial to the continued survival of humans on this planet.

“Art being the tool for the ongoing learning Journey”



Notes from the artist

Keip Djooroot (Water Tracks/Paths)

Weaving their way through the centre of the painting are three significant lines that are Noongar symbols for paths or tracks (djooroot). These well-worn tracks throughout the country are what the present roads and highways have been built on.

Roads and highways take us on many journeys; some are necessary, simply a way of getting where we need to go, and other journeys are the ones that we choose to go on. These lines are representative of both as well as the metaphorical ones that are often talked about.

The circles that the paths/tracks connect with are also Noongar symbols for camps or midden sites, which in contemporary language represents councils, towns and major cities throughout Western Australia. The background is also broken up into six regions that also represent the State of Western Australia:

- Kimberley
- Pilbara
- Murchison
- Gascoyne
- Goldfields
- South West.

The northern parts of the country would depict this throughout, with what they refer to as song-lines. In the South-West we (Noongar people) refer to them as waterlines. Of the State's six water catchment regions, five water catchments are in the South West and provide water to the Goldfields (western desert) regions as well.

I have used the traditional designs from Noongar country that also represents water, and the waterlines that we follow throughout the southern parts of the State.

The lines that you see in this artwork are the colours of our water and waterways, as well as the hues they take on, such as gold and silver.

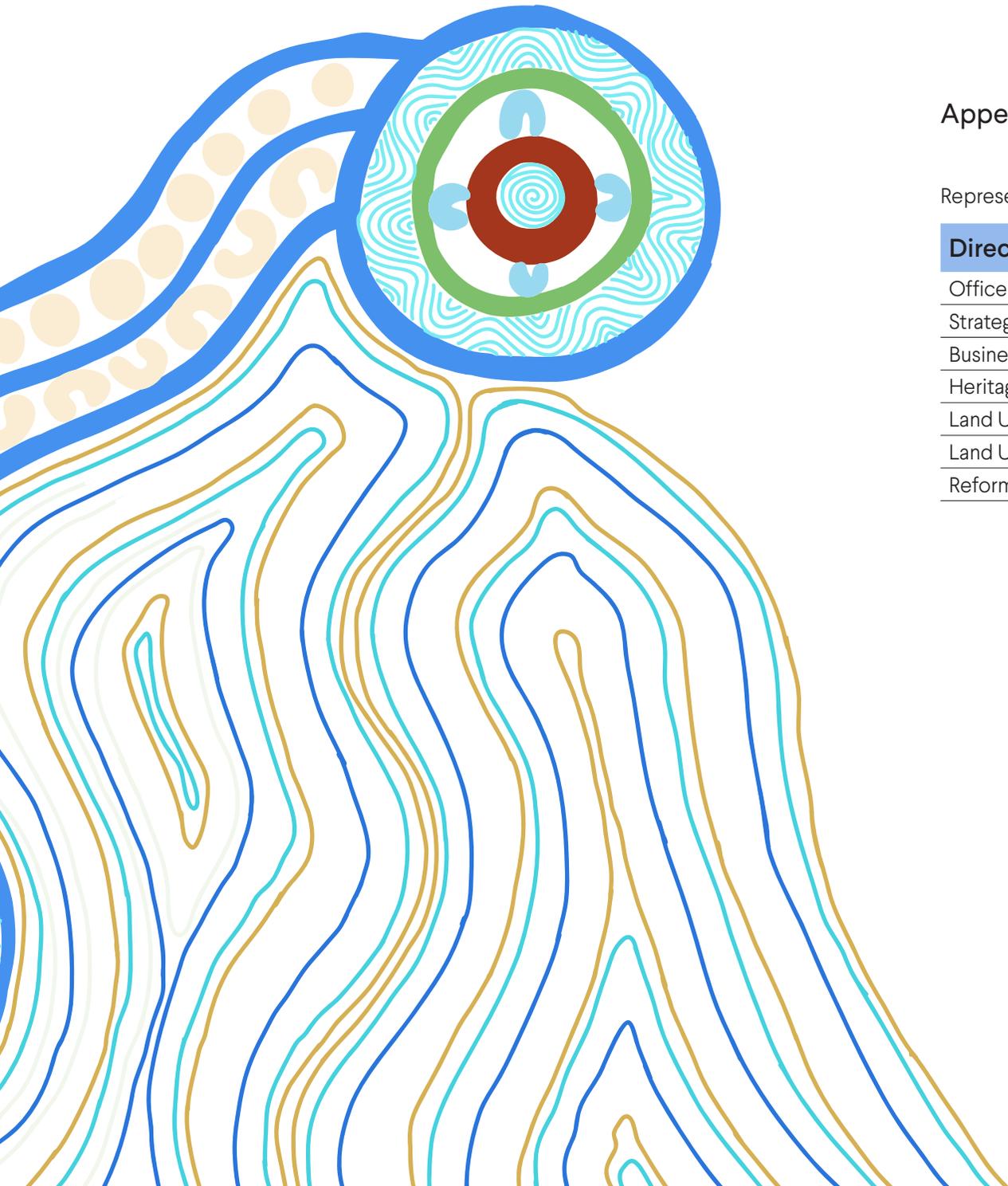
The background colours are representative of the State's lands and seas, as our borders are the actual ocean (except the Goldfields) which I have put into the centre that is red, like the colour of the western desert country.

Throughout this artwork are layers with three circles, representing the Past, the Present and the Future. They also represent the realms we travel throughout our lore and cultural journeys both in traditional and contemporary senses.

1. The Dreaming (the creation period)
2. The Living (which is now)
3. The Spirit world (the place that we go when we pass from the living).

Inside these circles are symbols of water; which in our culture represent persistence. The water cuts through the rock because it is persistent, rather than because it is stronger.

There are also symbols of people – two males and two females, that are representative of decision-making councils and people that we meet throughout our journeys as well as our current workforces and colleagues and teams, however large or small.



Appendix 1 – Current RAP Working Group

Representation across business areas of the Department include:

Directorate	Number of positions
Office of the Director General	x2
Strategy and Engagement	x2
Business and Corporate Services	x2
Heritage and Property Services	x2
Land Use Management	x2
Land Use Planning	x2
Reform Design and State Assessment	x2

RAP Working Group

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